

IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently amended) A method of managing a Constant Access Time Bounded (CATB) cache, the method comprising:

dividing the cache into a non-zero whole number of search groups, wherein a data element to be inserted into the cache is mapped only to one search group;

reserving a first number of unallocated lines in the cache for pinned data, the first number being less than the number of lines in the cache;

allocating a second number of unallocated lines in the cache to the search groups for non-pinned data, wherein the second number is a number of remaining lines after the first number of lines has been reserved and wherein each search group is allocated a fixed number of lines for non-pinned data; and

inserting the data element into the cache as pinned data, wherein the inserting includes

selecting a line from the lines reserved for pinned data,

storing the data in the line, and

inserting the line of pinned data into a search group of the CATB cache, wherein a constant number of non-pinned lines are maintained within the search group.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein each line of the cache is stored in non-volatile memory.

3. (Original) The method of claim 2 further comprising:
recovering the organization of the cache on power up following a loss of power to the cache by
in a first phase of recovery, for each line in the cache
determining if the line is allocated;
if the line is allocated, inserting the line in a search group of the cache; and
if the line is not allocated, inserting the line into a pool of free lines;
and
in a second phase of recovery, for each search group
determining the number of pinned lines in the search group; and
adding at least one line from the pool of free lines to each search group that has at least one pinned line.
4. (Original) The method of claim 3 wherein the cache is a disk cache in a processor based system.
5. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein inserting the line of pinned data into a search group of the cache further comprises:
indicating that the line is allocated;
indicating that the line is pinned; and
using a tag of the line to map the line to a search group of the cache.

6. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 5 wherein:
the CATB cache is implemented as a set-associative cache;
each search group of the cache is a set of the cache; and
inserting the line of pinned data into a search group of the cache further
comprises:
 using the address of the data as the tag of the line;
 performing a modulus operation between the tag and the number of sets
 (N) in the cache (the tag MOD N) to map the tag to a set of the cache;
 performing a search based on the tag of the line; and
 inserting the line of pinned data into a dynamic data structure that
represents the set.
7. (Original) The method of claim 6 wherein indicating that the line is pinned further
comprises modifying metadata associated with the line to indicate that the line is
pinned.
8. (Currently amended) For a non-zero whole number N, in an N-way set
associative non-volatile disk cache, a method comprising:
 dividing the cache into N sets, wherein a data element to be inserted into the
cache is mapped only to one set;
 reserving a predetermined number of lines for pinned data and organizing them
into a pool of lines for pinned data;

distributing the remaining lines in the cache into N dynamic data structures of approximately the same size to represent the N sets of the cache, wherein each set is allocated a fixed number of lines for non-pinned data;

inserting the data element into the cache as pinned data, wherein the inserting comprises

inserting the data into a line from the pool for pinned data;

marking the line as allocated by modifying metadata associated with the line;

determining the set to which the line belongs using a mapping based on the tag associated with the line;

removing the line from the pool for pinned data; and

adding the line of pinned data to the set, wherein a constant number of non-pinned lines are maintained within the set.

9. (Original) The method of claim 8 further comprising:

recovering the organization of the cache on power up following a loss of power to the cache by

in a first phase of recovery, for each line in the cache

determining if the line is allocated;

if the line is allocated, inserting the line in a set of the cache using a mapping based on the tag associated with the line; and

if the line is not allocated, inserting the line into a pool of unallocated lines;

and

in a second phase of recovery, for each set in the cache

determining the number of pinned lines in the set using the metadata associated with each line in the set; and

moving one or more lines from the pool of unallocated lines to each set that has at least one pinned line so that the number of non-pinned lines in each set is approximately the same.

10. (Currently amended) An apparatus comprising:

an N-way set associative cache implemented in non-volatile memory, wherein the cache is divided into N sets, wherein N is a non-zero whole number, wherein a data element to be inserted into the cache is mapped only to one set, and wherein each set is allocated a fixed number of lines for non-pinned data;

a pinned data portion of the non-volatile memory to store a pool of lines for pinned data; and

a pinned data insertion module to

insert pinned data into a line from the pool of lines for pinned data;

mark the line as being allocated by modifying metadata associated with the line;

determine a set to which the line belong using a mapping based on the tag associated with the line;

remove the line from the pool for pinned data; and

add the line to the set, wherein a constant number of non-pinned lines are maintained within the set.

11. (Original) The apparatus of claim 10 further comprising
a power source to provide power to the cache; and
a recovery module to recover the organization of the cache on power up
following
a loss of power to the cache from the power source by
in a first phase of recovery, for each line in the cache
determining if the line is allocated;
if the line is allocated, inserting the line in a set of the cache using a
mapping based on the tag associated with the line; and
if the line is not allocated, inserting the line into a pool of unallocated lines;
and
in a second phase of recovery, for each set in the cache
determining the number of pinned lines in the set using the metadata
associated with each line in the set; and
moving one or more lines from the pool of unallocated lines to each set
that has at least one pinned line so that the number of non-pinned lines in each
set is approximately the same.

12. (Currently amended) A system comprising:
a processor;
a disk communicatively coupled to the processor;
an N-way set associative cache implemented in non-volatile battery-backed up
Dynamic Random Access Memory communicatively coupled to the processor, wherein
the cache is divided into N sets, wherein N is a non-zero whole number, wherein a data

element to be inserted into the cache is mapped only to one set, and wherein each set is allocated a fixed number of lines for non-pinned data;

a pinned data portion of the non-volatile memory to store a pool of lines for pinned data; and

a pinned data insertion module to

insert pinned data into a line from the pool of lines for pinned data;

mark the line as being allocated by modifying metadata associated with the line;

determine a set into which the line using a mapping based on the tag associated with the line;

remove the line from the pool for pinned data; and

add the line to the set, wherein a constant number of non-pinned lines are maintained within the set.

13. (Currently amended) A ~~tangible~~ non-transitory machine-readable storage medium having stored thereon data which when accessed by a machine causes the machine to perform a method comprising:

dividing a CATB cache into a non-zero whole number of search groups, wherein a data element to be inserted into the cache is mapped only to one search group;

reserving a first number of unallocated lines in the cache for pinned data, the first number being less than the number of lines in the cache;

allocating a second number of unallocated lines in the cache to the search groups for non-pinned data, wherein the second number is a number of remaining lines

after the first number of lines has been reserved and wherein each search group is allocated a fixed number of lines for non-pinned data; and

inserting the data element into the cache as pinned data, wherein the inserting includes

selecting a line from the lines reserved for pinned data,

storing the data in the line, and

inserting the line of pinned data into a search group of the CATB cache, wherein a constant number of non-pinned lines are maintained within the search group.

14. (Currently amended) The ~~tangible~~ non-transitory machine-readable storage medium of claim 13 wherein each line of the cache is stored in non-volatile memory.

15. (Currently amended) The ~~tangible~~ non-transitory machine-readable storage medium of claim 14 wherein the method further comprises:

recovering the organization of the cache on power up following a loss of power to the cache by

in a first phase of recovery, for each line in the cache

determining if the line is allocated;

if the line is allocated, inserting the line in a search group of the cache;

and

if the line is not allocated, inserting the line into a pool of free lines; and

in a second phase of recovery, for each search group

determining the number of pinned lines in the search group; and

adding at least one line from the pool of free lines to each search group that has at least one pinned line.

16. (Currently amended) The ~~tangible~~ non-transitory machine-readable storage medium of claim 15 wherein the cache is a disk in a processor based system.

17. (Currently amended) The ~~tangible~~ non-transitory machine-readable storage medium of claim 13 wherein the method further comprises:

indicating that the line is allocated;

indicating that the line is pinned; and

using a tag of the line to map the line to a search group of the cache.

18. (Currently amended) The ~~tangible~~ non-transitory machine-readable storage medium of claim 17 wherein the method further comprises:

the CATB cache is implemented as a set-associative cache;

each search group of the cache is a set of the cache; and

inserting the line of pinned data into a search group of the cache further comprises

using the address of the data as the tag of the line;

performing a modulus operation between the tag and the number of

sets (N) in the cache (the tag MOD N) to map the tag to a set of the

cache;

performing a search based on the tag of the line; and

inserting the line of pinned data into a dynamic data structure that represents the set.

19. (Currently amended) The ~~tangible~~ non-transitory machine-readable storage medium of claim 18 wherein indicating that the line is pinned further comprises modifying metadata associated with the line to indicate that the line is pinned.

20. (Currently amended) A ~~tangible~~ non-transitory machine-readable storage medium having stored thereon data which when accessed by a machine causes the machine to perform, for a whole number N, in an N-way set associative non-volatile disk cache, a method comprising:

dividing the cache into N sets, wherein N is a non-zero whole number, wherein a data element to be inserted into the cache is mapped only to one set;

reserving a predetermined number of lines for pinned data and organizing them into a pool of lines for pinned data;

distributing the remaining lines in the cache into N dynamic data structures of approximately the same size to represent the N sets of the cache, wherein each set is allocated a fixed number of lines for non-pinned data;

inserting the data element into the cache as pinned data, wherein the inserting comprises

inserting the data into a line from the pool for pinned data;

marking the line as allocated by modifying metadata associated with the line;

determining the set to which the line belongs using a mapping based on the tag associated with the line;

removing the line from the pool for pinned data; and

adding the line of pinned data to the set, wherein a constant number of non-pinned lines are maintained within the set.

21. (Currently amended) The ~~tangible~~ non-transitory machine-readable storage medium of claim 20 further comprises:

recovering the organization of the cache on power up following a loss of power to the cache by

in a first phase of recovery, for each line in the cache

determining if the line is allocated;

if the line is allocated, inserting the line in a set of the cache using a mapping based on the tag associated with the line; and

if the line is not allocated, inserting the line into a pool of unallocated lines; and

in a second phase of recovery, for each set in the cache

determining the number of pinned lines in the set using the metadata associated with each line in the set; and

moving one or more lines from the pool of unallocated lines to each set that has at least one pinned line so that the number of non-pinned lines in each set is approximately the same.

22-27. (Cancelled)